



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

Regulatory Branch (1145b)
3437 Airport Way
Suite 206
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4777

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: September 16, 2005

EXPIRATION DATE: October 16, 2005

REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-1987-620-Z

WATERWAY NUMBER: Tanana River 106

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for certain work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the attached plan.

APPLICANT: State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

AGENT: Mr. Chuck Howe, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709.

LOCATION: Fairbanks International Airport. Sections 23, 24, 25, 26, T. 1 S., R. 2 W., and section 30, T. 1 S., R. 1 W., FM. Latitude 64.82 N., Longitude 147.85 W.

WORK: The applicant proposes to dredge a total of approximately 2,267,000 cubic yards of material from wetlands, discharge a total of approximately 584,000 cubic yards of materials into approximately 21.1 acres of wetlands and mechanically clear and excavate approximately 25 acres for a new material site. Of the total fill material: 525,000 cubic yards would be discharged into 16 acres of wetlands for the construction of a heavy cargo apron and paved snow storage area; 4000 cubic yards would be discharged into approximately 0.1 acres for the ARRC Track realignment; 55,000 cubic yards would be discharged into five acres for the realignment of Airport Industrial Road. The applicant also proposes to discharge approximately 419,000 cubic yards of material into 12 acres of waters of the U.S. (work associated with the closure of the existing borrow source). All work would be completed in accordance with the attached plans; sheets 1-4 dated Sept. 2, 2005 and sheets 5-10 dated March 2005.

PURPOSE: The dredge and fill activity would be conducted during improvements to the Fairbanks International Airport. The terminal and parking renovation and expansion is needed to address structural and functional deficiencies of the facility, meet increased demand and address safety concerns due to poor pavement condition. See sheets 1-10 for additional information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The original permit was issued in 1987 and has been modified 12 times. The current application is for an additional modification to the 1987 permit. The planned work includes the construction of a foundation for a renovated and enlarged airport terminal and the construction of a base for parking improvements; the reconstruction of Runway 1L-19R; the construction of a 700,000

square feet heavy aircraft cargo apron and paved snow storage area; the realignment of approximately 4000 lineal feet of Airport Industrial Road; the realignment of approximately 3800 lineal feet of the ARRC spur track; the construction of pads for facility improvements and relocation; the excavation of a material site to supply aggregate for construction; the temporary stockpile of aggregate and the use of overburden to begin closure (fill) of old borrow pit. Clean unusable excavation from the runway project would be used to fill the old borrow pit south of Taxiway "B" in order to reduce potential habitat for birds. See sheets 1 - 10 for additional information. Also, more information and the Near Term Projects Environmental Assessment can be found at <http://www.fai-ea.com/>.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The latest published version of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) has been consulted for the presence or absence of historic properties, including those listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. A property determined eligible (with 6 associated sites within the properties boundaries) (FAI-01292 to FAI-01297) was found within the project area. There is an unevaluated property in the vicinity of the worksite. Two additional sites (FAI-01592 and FAI-01593) may lie within the project boundary. No determination of eligibility has been completed for those sites. Because the property has been determined to lie within the project area, a determination of eligibility and, if needed, a determination of effect will be made in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Consultation of the AHRS constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the District Engineer at this time. This application is being coordinated with SHPO. Any comments SHPO may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Alaska District fully supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between the Federal government and Federally recognized Tribes. This notice invites participation by agencies, Tribes, and members of the public in the Federal decision-making process. In addition, Tribes with protected rights or resources that could be significantly affected by a proposed Federal action (e.g., a permit decision) have the right to consult with the Alaska District on a government-to-government basis. Views of each Tribe regarding protected rights and resources will be accorded due consideration in this process. This Public Notice serves as notification to the Tribes within the area potentially affected by the proposed work and invites their participation in the Federal decision-making process regarding the protected Tribal right or resource. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Engineer during the public comment period.

ENDANGERED SPECIES:

No threatened or endangered species are known to use the project area.

Preliminarily, the described activity will not affect threatened or endangered species, or their critical habitat designated as endangered or threatened, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine

Fisheries Service. Any comments they may have concerning endangered or threatened wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The proposed work is being evaluated for possible effects to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) pursuant to the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996 (MSFCMA), 16 U.S.C. et seq and associated federal regulations found at 50 CFR 600 Subpart K. The Alaska District includes areas of EFH as Fishery Management Plans. We have reviewed the January 20, 1999, North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Environmental Assessment to locate EFH area as identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

We have determined that the described activity within the proposed area will not adversely affect EFH, including anadromous fish and federally managed fishery resources.

SPECIAL AREA DESIGNATION: None.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The decision whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur, are therefore determined by the outcome of the general balancing process. That decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Comments on the described work, with the reference number, should reach this office no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Please contact Ellen Huber at the Fairbanks Field Office, 907-474-2166, or by email at Ellen.M.Huber@poa02.usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this notice.

AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authorities:

(X) Perform work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States - Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403).

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States - Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

A plan and Notice of Application for State Water Quality Certification are attached to this Public Notice.

District Engineer
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Attachments

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

STATE OF ALASKA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF WATER

Non-Point Source Water Pollution Control Program
401 Certification Program

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct an activity that might result in a discharge into navigable waters, in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), also must apply for and obtain certification from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the discharge will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. By agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Conservation, application for a Department of the Army permit to discharge dredged or fill material into navigable waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act also may serve as application for State Water Quality Certification.

Notice is hereby given that the application for a Department of the Army Permit described in the Corps of Engineers' Public Notice No. POA-1987-620-Z, Tanana River serves as application for a short-term variance of State Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Conservation, as provided in Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL 95-217).

The Department will review the proposed activity to ensure that, except for an allowed, short-term variance, any discharge to waters of the United States resulting from the referenced project will comply with the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. The Department also may deny or waive certification.

Any person desiring to comment on the project with respect to Water Quality Certification may submit written comments within 30 days of the date of the Corps of Engineer's Public Notice to:

Department of Environmental Conservation
WQM/401 Certification
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2617
Telephone: (907) 269-7564
FAX: (907) 269-7508

SUMMARY OF WETLANDS INVOLVEMENT

BACKGROUND

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), with funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is proposing to construct landside and airside improvements at Fairbanks International Airport (FAI) near Fairbanks, Alaska (Sheet 1). The proposed improvements would be completed in a series of construction projects funded over the next three to five years. Improvements include:

- Terminal improvements which involve demolition of the older portion of the terminal and the renovation and expansion of the terminal building, landside parking and minor reconfiguration of access roads.
- Reconstruction of the Runway 1L-19R and modifications to the parallel taxiway to permit its use as a temporary runway.
- Relocation of heavy aircraft cargo apron to an area southwest of Taxiway A, which also involves realignment of the Alaska Railroad Company (ARRC) spur and the circulation roads at the south end of the airport.
- Relocation of the Instrument Landing System (ILS) and Approach Lighting System with Sequenced Flashing Lights (ALSF) control buildings as well as the existing ADOT&PF airfield regulator building.

Fill material for the proposed improvements would be obtained from the development of a new onsite borrow source, located southeast of the airport facilities. Overburden from the borrow source would be used to close the existing materials site.

PROJECT AREA

The Fairbanks International Airport (FAI) is located approximately four miles west from the urban center of Fairbanks, just north of the confluence of the Chena and Tanana Rivers. The airport property consists of approximately 3,640 acres of land, which includes both airside and landside facilities. The airside facilities include runways, taxiways, aprons, navigational aids, and lighting. The landside facilities include the terminal building area, automobile parking, terminal building curbside, air cargo operations, and facilities for airport support and general aviation.

WETLANDS IMPACTS

The majority of the undeveloped area on FAI property is classified as wetlands. PDC performed a Preliminary Wetland Determination for the project area (2005). On February 18, 2005, the USACE issued a jurisdictional determination approving the Preliminary Wetland Determination and indicating that the project will require a modification of DA permit POA-1987-0620, Tanana River 106.

Under the proposed improvement plan wetlands impacts involve excavation and fill for the construction of the heavy aircraft cargo apron, including the associated road and

railroad realignments, into palustrine and riverine wetlands. The development of the new material site and closure of the existing material site would also impact wetlands. Table 1 at the end of this summary shows the extent of work, including volume and area of impacts to wetlands.

Development of the new material site and processing of borrow material (i.e., aggregate screening and crushing and asphalt production) will require temporary stockpile of materials. These temporary stockpiles would be placed within the proposed 25 acre development area for the new material site or within the disturbed areas of the existing borrow site. No additional area beyond that being permitted is required for the temporary stockpile areas. The material site development includes excavation of Channel A.

AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION AND MITIGATION

Avoidance of wetlands was included as one of the factors in the evaluation of alternate facility locations and layouts for the proposed improvements. Avoidance was successful for some facilities without sacrificing facility function (e.g., the terminal parking layout). Some facilities could not be sited to avoid wetland impacts and still maintain their functionality (e.g., the heavy aircraft cargo apron). For these sites, options to minimize impacts or to shift impacts to lower-value wetlands (e.g., railroad spur realignment options) were evaluated. Where possible, facilities have been designed to maintain drainage patterns that support surrounding wetlands. Where the drainage source is from the paved surface, the drainage would be handled consistent with the FAI Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as required under the Multi-Sector General Permit prior to discharge.

Heavy Aircraft Cargo Apron

A plan view and typical section of the new heavy cargo apron are provided on Sheets 2 and 3. A mitigation plan for wetland impacts at FAI has been in place since 1988. The wetland fill associated with the construction of the heavy aircraft cargo apron and the realignment of the ARRC spur and Airport Industrial Road would be mitigated in accordance with that agreement.

Construction of the new heavy aircraft cargo apron involves the relocation of an ARRC spur that currently crosses the site. Two railroad relocation options were included for analysis in the EA. The preferred option moves the railroad tracks to the road bed of Airport Industrial Road, and relocates to Airport Industrial Road to the south of its existing alignment. A typical section of the new railroad spur and Airport Industrial Road are shown on Sheet 4. Both railroad relocation options would have required the placement of fill in wetlands.

The preferred realignment option (R2) still requires some impact to remnant sloughs, but it has been configured to shift the majority of wetland impacts to the forested wetlands adjacent to Airport Industrial Road. While forested wetlands provide wildlife habitat and perform other wetland functions, they are generally considered by the resource agencies to have lower wetland value than remnant sloughs. While the selected option leaves

more of the remnant sloughs in place which will attract wildlife (a potential hazard to aircraft), the public safety concerns with these areas are partially mitigated by the active bird hazing program at FAI.

Materials Site

Sheets 5 and 6 show the new material site plan and typical section. There are no practical alternative locations that avoid wetland impacts within the boundaries of the existing airport. Continued use of the existing borrow source limits bidding options and goes counter to the long-range plan for the airport. Although the volume needed for this project could come from the existing pit, its use would:

- Limit competitive bidding, as only one contractor in the area currently has the equipment required to economically mine the pit at its current depth.
- Deepen a pit that FAI may eventually need to fill a portion of to protect the approach of a planned General Aviation runway.

The location of the proposed material site was selected to coincide with long term (beyond 20 years) airport expansion. Since a material site is needed, it makes sense to locate it in the area proposed for the future float pond.

In an e-mail dated February 11, 2005, the ADNR Office of Habitat Management and Permitting proposed as mitigation for the project:

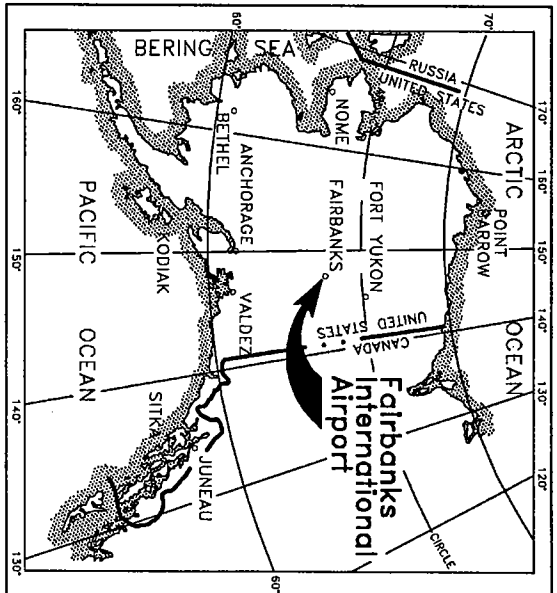
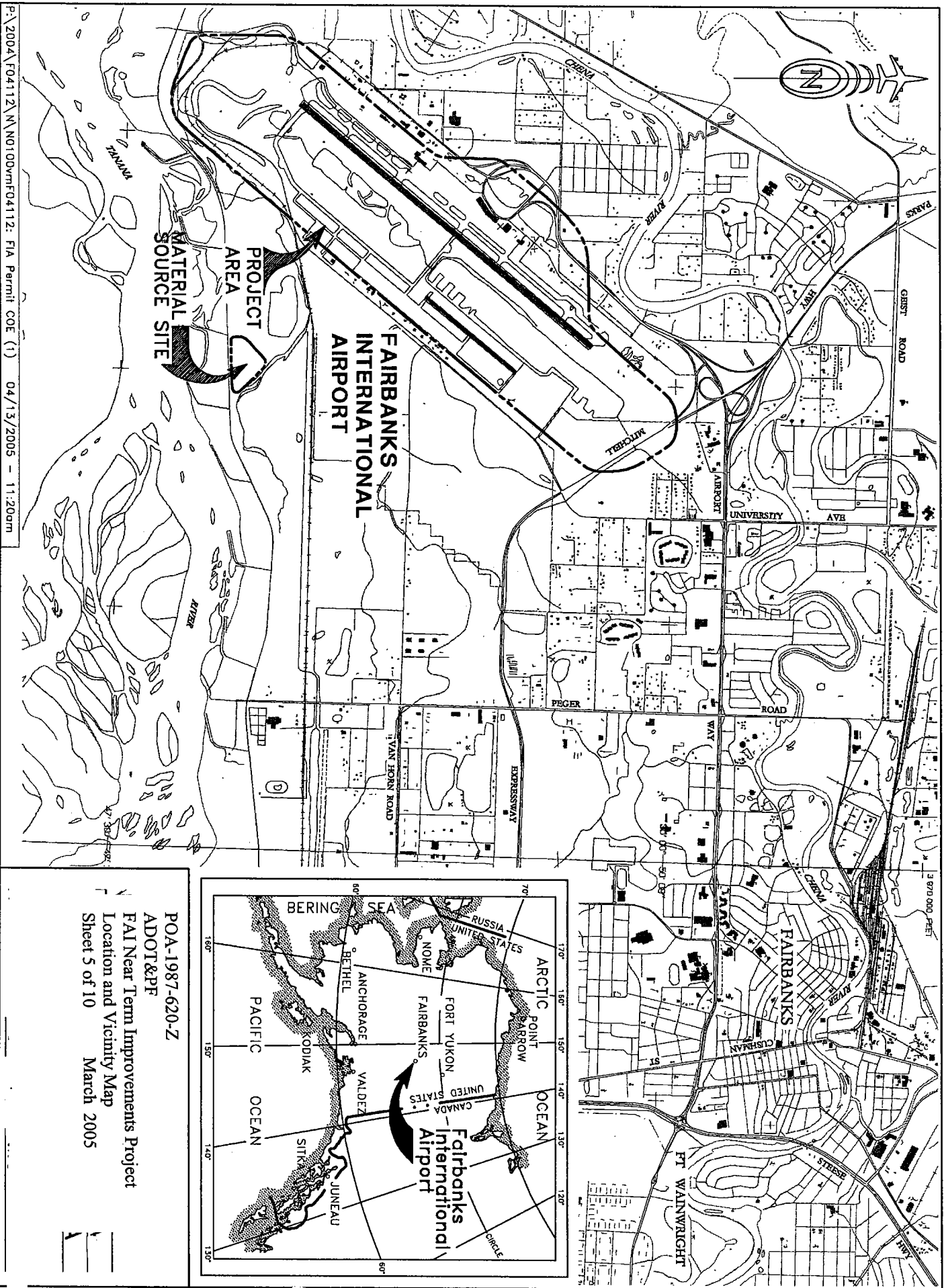
- Abandoning the existing borrow source
- Using the overburden from the proposed material site to do reclamation of the existing site
- Leaving (or re-creating) a channel to keep the existing material site connected with Channel A

Overburden from development would be placed in the existing borrow source to begin the closure process (Fill into Waters of the U.S.). Disturbance to fish that have become trapped in the existing material site/pond during high water events will be lessened by a combination of leaving or recreating the connection from the existing material site/pond to Channel A and filling the site from the southeast end to allow for resident fish escapement. A temporary sediment trap would be placed within the connection to Channel A in order to prevent sedimentation outside of the site during disposal operations.

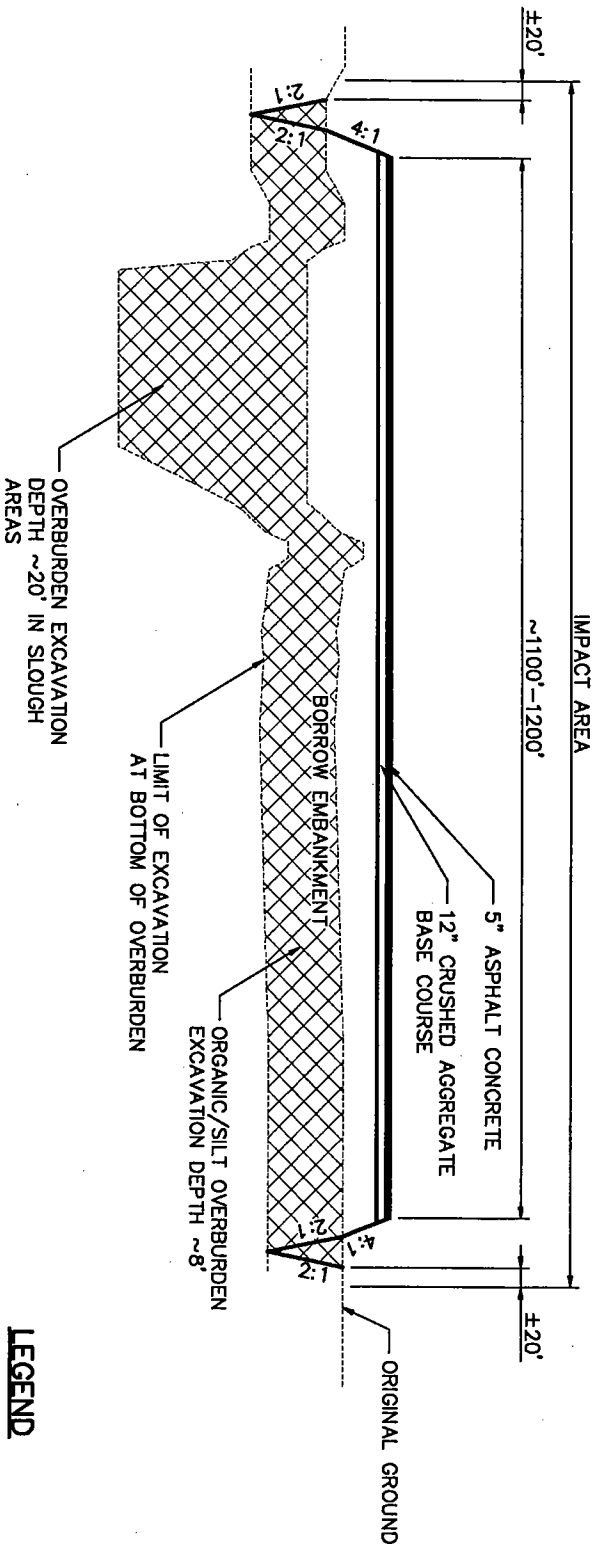
Development of the new pit involves excavation through the Channel A (Sheet 5 of 6). Construction documents will include language to notify the contractor that they must accommodate flow in Channel A, which could flow all summer due to upstream discharge.

TABLE 1 - JURISDICTIONAL WETLAND IMPACTS

TASK	Terminal Renovation and Expansion	Runway 11-19R Reconstruct	Heavy Cargo Apron with paved snow storage	ARRC Track Realign Option R2	Airport Industrial Road Realign	Nav-Aid Control Facility Relocates	New Borrow Source (mechanized clearing and excavation)	Closure of Existing Borrow Source (fill)	Totals
Project Totals									
Total Dredged Volume	26,000 cy	0 cy	694,000 cy	4,000 cy	3,000 cy	3000 cy	1,895,000cy	0 cy	2,625,000 cy
Total Fill Volume	80,000 cy	38,000 cy	991,000 cy	8,000 cy	120,000 cy	4000 cy	0 cy	419,000 cy	1,660,000 cy
Impacted Wetlands									
Area	0 acres	0 acres	16 acres	≤ 0.1 acre	5 acres	0 acres	25 acres	0 acres	46.1 acres
Dredged Volume	0 cy	0 cy	368,000cy	2,000 cy	2,000 cy	0 cy	1,895,000cy	0 cy	2,267,000 cy
Fill Volume	0 cy	0 cy	525,000cy	4,000 cy	55,000 cy	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	584,000 cy
Impacted Waters of the U.S.									
Area	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	12 acres	12 acres
Fill Volume	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	0 cy	419,000 cy	419,000 cy



POA-1987-620-Z
ADOT&PF
FAI Near Term Improvements Project
Location and Vicinity Map
Sheet 5 of 10
March 2005



A
3

HEAVY CARGO APRON TYPICAL SECTION

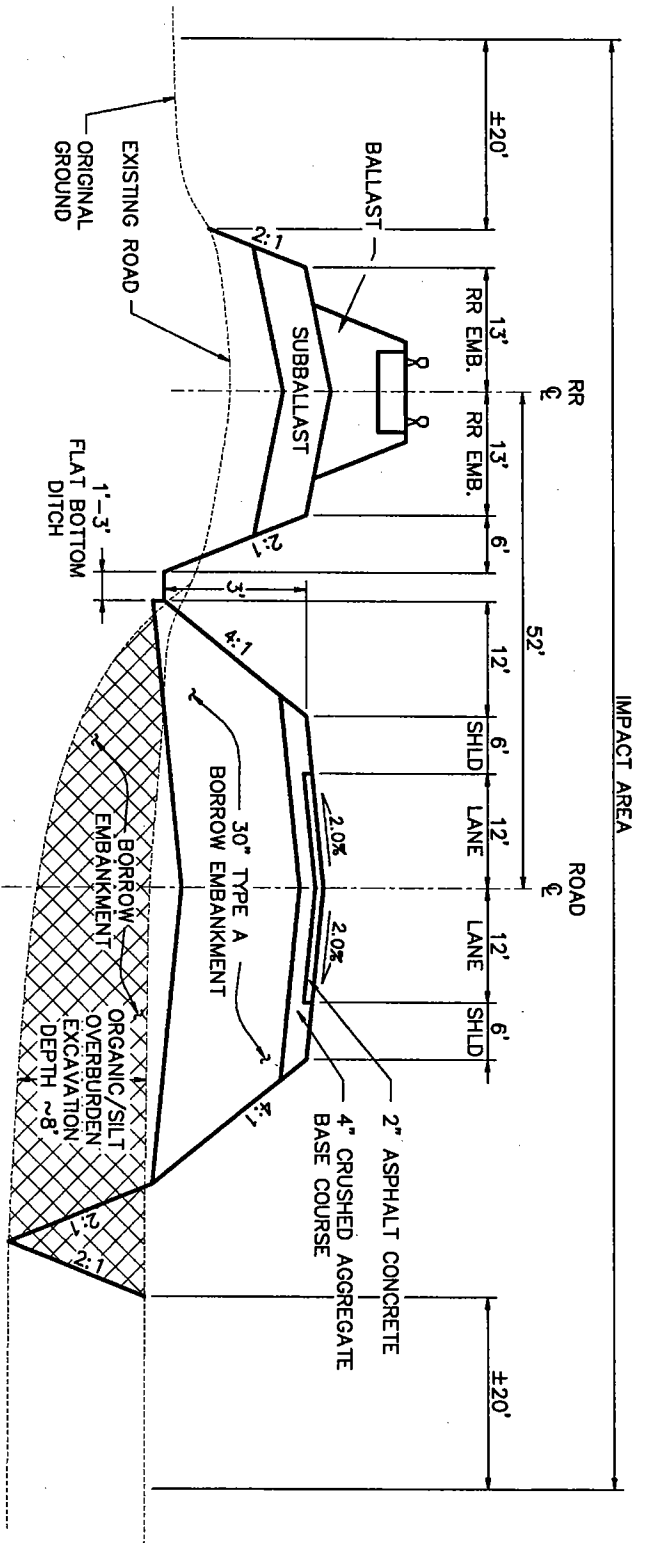
NTS

LEGEND

 ORGANIC/SILT OVERBURDEN EXCAVATION

TITLE BLOCK

POA-1987-620-Z
ADOT&PF
FAI Near Term Improvements Project
Cargo Apron Section
Sheet 7 of 10 March 2005



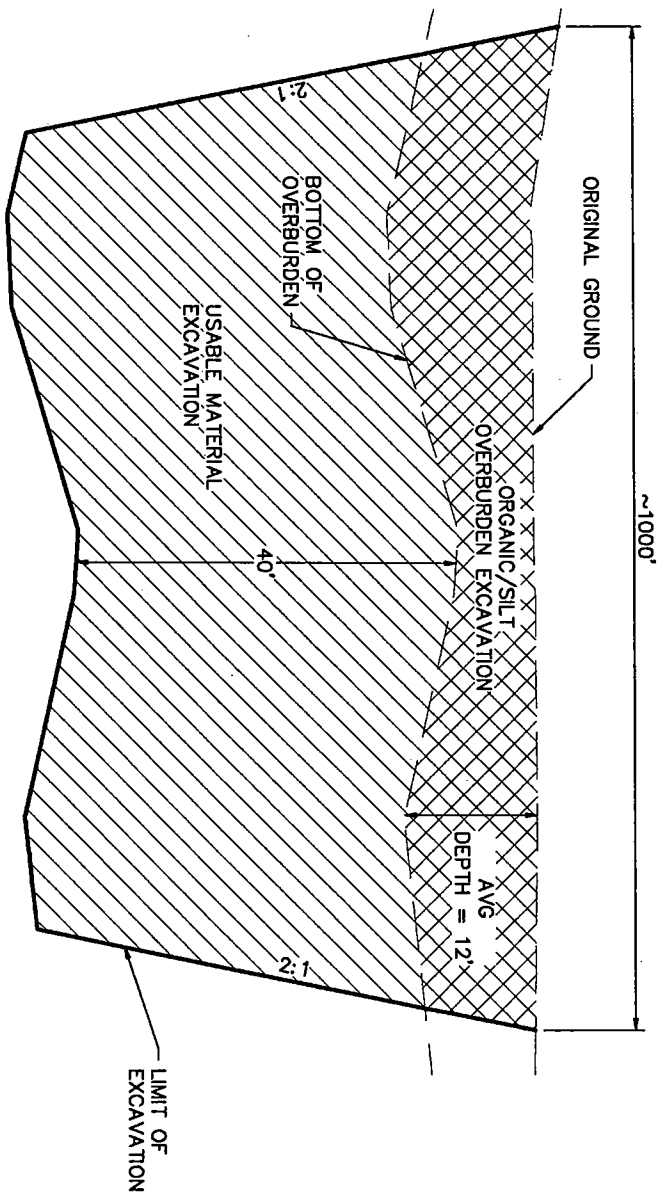
B

RAILROAD & ROAD TYPICAL SECTION

NTS

TITLE BLOCK

POA-1987-620-Z
ADOT&PF
FAI Near Term Improvements Project
Rail and Road Sections
Sheet 8 of 10
March 2005



NOTE: TEMPORARY STOCKPILES WOULD BE PLACED WITHIN THE PROPOSED MATERIAL SITE BOUNDARY OR WITHIN THE PREVIOUSLY DISTURBED AREAS OF THE EXISTING MATERIAL SITE.



**TYPICAL SECTION OF NEW
MATERIAL SITE EXCAVATION**

NTS

TITLE BLOCK

POA-1987-620-Z
ADOT&PF
FAI Near Term Improvements Project
Material Site Excavation Section
Sheet 10 of 10 March 2005